APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY
2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Curators of the University of Missouri

Application ID: 14AC157669

Program Name: Missouri College Advising Corps

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant proposes to focus 100% on college advisement.

The applicant addresses this need by partnering with disadvantaged high schools to place a near-peer college advisor to assist students with support to go on to college.

The applicant used the Stanford-based evaluation survey that determines that most advisees would not have gone to college without the near-peer college advisement provided by Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC).

The applicant proposes to provide full-time college advisement by advisors all day each school day compared to only in evenings and on weekends.

The applicant provided sufficient rationale regarding the low number of disadvantaged high schools students enrolling in post-secondary education. Subsequently, the applicant supported their rationale with data from local data extrapolated from the 2010 U.S. Census.

The applicant identified existing needs in the targeted community. The applicant describes that in the target area very few students in disadvantaged high schools across Missouri aspire to and enroll in a post-secondary education.

The applicant provides some data to document the severity of the need in the target community. The applicant describes that Missouri ranks 27th in percentage of adults with a college degree.

The applicant provides data to demonstrate the relationship between low income and college attendance.

The applicant supplied sufficent data as to why low-income, first-generation-college, and underrepresented minorities enroll in and complete college at a rate much lower than the U.S. average (The Education Trust, 2012).

The applicant describes that low-income, first-generation-college, and underrepresented students are at the greatest risk of not enrolling in or completing college: Only 1 in 10 low-income students earns a post-secondary degree while 50% of those from high-income families do.

The applicant provides data to demonstrate the relationship between a lack of college education and income. The applicant describes that compared to their college-educated counterparts, non-degree holders have fewer career options, earn less money, are more often unemployed and dependent on social services, and are less actively involved citizens.

The applicant cites specific and recent data showing that the MCAC will increase the college-going rates in partner schools over previous year's rates and as compared to a 3-year average baseline.

The applicant sufficiently provided data on its theoretical model from 2013.

The applicant also provides sufficient data on its organizational study from 2011.

Applicant provided sufficient data to support the success in past performance from Stanford University.

The applicant provides sufficient data from its evaluation team at Stanford University which indicated that in the first four years, college-going rates increased by 10.35 percent on the average across all partner schools with the highest increases of 27.55 percent.

The applicant demonstrates that they have effectively met their goals in the past.

As noted in the Past Performance section of the Applicant's narrative, the applicant explains that as an AmeriCorps State grantee for the past four years, MCAC has exceeded performance measure goals; increasing college enrollments by 32% and 58% while the goal was set at 5% and 7.5% (MCAC has set a higher percentage goal for this project).

Weaknesses:

The applicant states the program will make college advisement available to 38,762 students, grades 9-12 (7,939 seniors) in 40 high schools within 28 school districts in 14 counties," but the data does not support the numbers or support that these numbers reflect underprivileged or minority students as the application specifies that is who the program will service.

There are no weaknesses in the Significant Weaknesses for AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems Evidence Base and Measurable Community Impact section.

There are no weaknesses in the Past Performance section.